SERDP Ecosystem Management Project

DoD EPA DOE SERDP
Strategic Environmental Research and Development Program

Conducting Ecological Studies on a Military Reservation

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US Army Corps of Engineers ®

Why Military Installations?

- Large, managed tracts
- Stewardship
- Sustainability
- Encroachment
- Changing missions
- Commitment and need

Research Needs

- Regulatory issues
- Ecosystem knowledge
- Management and monitoring tools
- Knowledge gaps

Purpose of SEMP

- To address knowledge gaps related to ecosystem management on military lands
  - Spatial/temporal scales
  - Indicators of change
  - Thresholds of impact
  - Biogeochemical processes
- To provide land managers with resources to understand and better manage their installations for long-term use - range sustainability
- To design and test a long-term baseline monitoring program on DOD lands

SEMP Today

- 2,000 field days
- 7,000 compartment reservations
- 14 universities, 4 government labs
- > 40 PhDs, 20 advanced degree students, > 50 techs
- No accidents, no interference

The Host Site Coordinator

- Schedules site access
- Manages resources
- Organized and professional
- Single contact for units and managers
- Aware of culture, problems and opportunities

Challenges

- Safety
- Regulated access
- Dynamic study area
- Ecosystems management
  - Applied, active, adaptive
  - Tech transfer, leveraging, teams

Vehicle Safety

Access Issues

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UXO and Live Fire

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Dynamics

Dynamics

Lessons Learned

- Site selection
- Scheduling and structure
- Communication
- Study design
- Less autonomy
- Equipment survivability

Conclusions

- Interesting place, challenging problems
- Onsite personnel are necessary
- Expect additional costs and complications
- Become more appreciative of military training mission